I have already pressed on the attention of the Director the question of fruit culture. He wants a fruit farm to be started at once in South Travancore and I am pressing him to open a farm in Central Travancore also, somewhere near Kottarakara. You have a very large extent of land available for cultivation on which graft mango, etc., can be raised. They are not grown, because it is said that rainfall is prejudicial to the growth of good varieties. But I know that in South Canara, in Bombay and on the Goa coast where the rainfall is heavier, they produce mango which is very good in quality and commands very good prices in the Bombay market. Recently I found at Trichur a very good variety of mangoes. I have drawn the attention of the Director to this matter and he is investigating its possibility.

In regard to scholarships, the boys who are coming to join the Agricultural school will not only get free instruction, but will also get stipends. In regard to lessons on agriculture, the view is now accepted more or less by every one that mere lessons without demonstration are of no use.

You will see from all that I have said that the charge that Government have not taken up seriously the question of pushing agriculture is not justifiable.

46. Agricultural needs of the Shencottah Taluk.

Mr. S. Subrahmanya Karayalar B. A. (Member, Shencottah Taluk) began by saying that *Kozhinja* could not be successfully cultivated in Travancore and represented that the Shencottah taluk is mainly agricultural like Nanjinad, but that it now stood in the same position as Nanjanad prior to the Kodayar Project. For want of adequate supply of water, the ryots were not ensured a successful harvest, while the rain water in the taluk flowed to the neighbouring British Indian villages for want of tanks of sufficient capacity to store it. After repeated representations, the Government sanctioned the restoration of the tanks, but the work done in several of the tanks was of no use as the storage capacity had not been increased. The Member suggested that new reservoirs should be constructed at Puliyara, Karkudi and the town of Shencottah, or the courses of some of the rivers should be diverted such as the Palaruvi, or Muripanchan or the Achankoil river or the Eattapadappu river. The Member understood that the Government had issued orders to the P. W. D. to survey some of the rivers, but he was not aware in what stage the survey stood. He, therefore, requested Government to bestow their serious and sympathetic consideration on the matter and help the people of Shencottah with a sufficient supply of water for purposes of cultivation. He added that the ryots would be prepared to meet the cost half way.

The Member then pointed out the necessity of improving and increasing the means of communication in the taluk with a view to the development of agriculture, and he suggested the construction of the following roads:—

(1) the construction of a road from Munnuvaikal up to Karkudi;

(2) the conversion of the Kalangatakaudi channel bund into a cartable road; and

(3) the improvement and conversion of the road from Puliyara up to the Ariankavu Railway tunnel.

He also suggested:—

(*a*) that the road from Puthur up to the Agricultural Farm at Mulakarachanparamettu should be put in thorough order with a bridge over the river on that side of Puthur;

(*b*) the road from Karkudi up to Niliamman Koil should be improved;

(*c*) the road from Elattur to Achanputur should be improved;

(*d*) the road from Aykudi to Martandapuram should be converted into a cartable road with bridges over the rivers between Ayikudi and Kilankad and Kilankad and Martandapuram; and

(*e*) that a road should be constructed from Samburvadakarai to Malukkankulam.

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He then dwelt on the need for setting apart good pasture lands in convenient centres in the various *pakuthies* and requested the issue of necessary orders to the Land Revenue Commissioner. He also said that, wherever the ryots of tank-fed lands were prepared to pay the cost of acquiring the foreshore lands of those tanks, Government should afford all facilities to them for doing so, and suggested that a conference of the leading ryots, say two for each *pakuthi*, might be held under the presidentship of the Land Revenue Commissioner to prepare a list of the tanks requiring the addition of foreshore lands to increase its holding capacity.

He next pointed out the impropriety of imposing a cess for any so-called improvements without giving additional facilities for the supply of water. In this connection he referred to the smallness of the work done in the improvement of Kalangatakaudi channel, and requested Government not to give effect to the orders imposing water cess on the fields irrigated by that channel.

Lastly, the Member spoke about the hardships suffered by the people of the Shencottah taluk for want of a standard *marakkal*. Shencottah being a frontier taluk, only British *marakkals* were in force there and it was highly desirable that Government should make arrangements for keeping as standard measures in the Taluk Cutcherry the Madras *marakkal* and the Madras *nazhi*. The merchants and the people should be compelled to make their *marakkals* and *nazhies* equal to those kept in the taluk cutcherry, the measures being frequently checked and any variance found being dealt with promptly according to law.

Dewan's reply.—You have first said that *kozhinja* cannot be profitably cultivated in this county for purposes of green manure. I cannot dogmatise on that. I have saked Dr. Kunjan Pillai to try *dainicha* in South Travancore.

Coming next to minor irrigation works, I consider that this is a very important matter. I inspected about 5 or 6 tanks when I visited Shencottah six months back. I was not satisfied with the way in which those works were being attended to. There were large amounts under the sanctioned estimates and they were being frittered away. That is not the sort of work that should be done, and I have therefore asked for a revision of the whole programme. I found that big estimates for Rs. 25,000 and so forth were prepared without any consideration of the question of return. The revenue aspect of the matter has not been investigated at all. We must have an investigation regarding the revenue aspect of each big estimate, and perhaps in that connection the question of a cess might have been mentioned by me. No definite orders for the imposition of a cess, however, have been issued.

You refer to some irrigation projects in the taluk. I am not aware of any project. I had no previous idea of what you were going to say on this point. If you mention specific projects that have been investigated in the past, I shall call for the connected papers and examine them.

You also refer to want of roads. I think that the taluk is one which is very well served by roads. You cannot have many roads from the village to the foot of the hills and you cannot have roads across paddy fields. However, the specific roads mentioned by you will be looked into. Next, so far as pasture lands are concerned, I think that you have plenty of them in the taluk. I saw during my visit to the taluk cattle resorting to the reserves freely for grazing and even foreign cattle were allowed to graze free in our reserves. At my instance this has now been stopped and foreign cattle have to pay grazing fees.

Your idea of a conference is a very good one. I shall ask the Land Revenue Commissioner or the Peishkar to hold a conference and ascertain what the agricultural needs of the taluk are, what is their order of urgency and so forth.

Lastly, with reference to your complaint about the standard *marakkal*, I shall call for a report from the Peishkar.

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